



Stadium Games: Fifty Years of Big League Greed and Bush League Boondoggles

Jay Weiner

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From Seattle to Houston to New York, governments and taxpayers are grappling with how to pay for new major league sports facilities. Support for public funding is down -- sports fans feel alienated in the face of team owners' demands, threats to leave, and spiraling player salaries. In *Stadium Games*, veteran Minneapolis Star Tribune reporter Jay Weiner zooms in on Minnesota's fifty-year history with pro sports and the issues contributing to the bid for a new stadium for the Minnesota Twins, along the way providing a big-picture evaluation of national sports economics.

Stadium Games begins with the events leading to the arrival of the Twins and Vikings to the state in 1961 and traces subsequent controversies about professional sports in the region up to the present. Weiner discusses the factors that make Minnesota the poster child for the nation's stadium debates -- the recent departure of the North Stars hockey team, the near departure of the Timberwolves, the strong opposition of taxpayers, and the apparent greed of team owners. In an account full of stories, scandals, and colorful personalities, Weiner reveals the behind-the-scenes deals and inside scoop on what went wrong in the unsuccessful 1997 campaign for a new ballpark, divulging how public relations experts failed and how government leaders conspired to fake out Minnesota's citizenry.

Weiner concludes with a "call to reason" -- a manifesto on how Minnesota and other small markets can take back pro sports and begin a new kind of conversation about what stadiums and teams can mean to their communities.

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